

published this week in APTA's Passenger Transport newsmagazine. I commend APTA and the public transportation community for their efforts to help us move closer to an America, as Mr. Melaniphy states, "With equal access for everyone, everywhere and at all times." I submit his essay.

(By Michael Melaniphy, APTA President & CEO)

The history of public transportation is the story of American progress. Over decades of technological and social change, our industry has helped open frontiers, grow local economies, and improve the lives of millions.

This month's silver anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a reminder of how mobility can change attitudes and break down barriers, both real and perceived.

When Congress in 1990 guaranteed equal opportunity for persons with disabilities, seminal changes were already writing the prelude for a new century focused on freedom and equity. It was the year that Nelson Mandela was released from a South African prison. East and West Germany were united. Tim Berners-Lee gave us the World Wide Web.

None of us could have foreseen what would emerge 25 years later, but we knew ADA would change the way our nation and our industry thought about access to public transportation.

It's been said that without struggle there can be no progress, and the early days of implementing this new law were challenging. The country had just entered a recession and many cash-strapped public transit agencies were politically and fiscally encumbered.

As a young general manager in Hamilton, Ohio, at the time, a dearth of resources for ADA compliance forced me to think differently about what equal access could mean for our community. We established a system-wide point deviation plan and introduced braille and tactile bus stop signs—both firsts in the nation that became models for other public transit organizations. The experience marked the beginning of a new personal passion to provide equal access to all.

To design practical solutions, we needed to gain a true understanding of the difficulties faced by persons with disabilities. While sitting in wheelchairs, our drivers, supervisors and I learned firsthand what it was like to navigate high floor buses and ride when incorrectly secured in a paratransit vehicle. We donned blackened goggles to experience a bus trip without visual clues to our location, and we discovered that ADA-mandated curb cuts didn't necessarily mean a sidewalk would take us to a desired destination once we left the bus. All of this helped us become better problem solvers, better thought leaders and better citizens.

Today the public transportation sector can take pride in how far we have come. Aspiration has replaced apprehension. From 1993 to 2013, the portion of accessible buses nearly doubled (from 51 percent to 99.8 percent), accessible light rail and streetcar fleets more than doubled (from 41 percent to 88 percent) and accessible commuter and hybrid rail fleets almost tripled (from 32 percent to 87 percent). Additionally, all of America's heavy rail and trolleybus fleets are 100 percent ADA compliant. Such advances in fixed route access have allowed tens of millions of people with disabilities to participate more fully in their communities.

For individuals who are unable to use these modes of public transit, our systems provided more than 230 million demand-response trips in 2013—from a starting point of 68 million in 1990, the year ADA was enacted.

The achievements of the past quarter century should encourage us to address any re-

maining challenges. Our industry must continue to build productive partnerships with the ADA community. Both physical and financial barriers persist for some legacy rail systems. And we need to find new, more cost-efficient ways to reach more people, especially through our fixed-route services.

In this 25th-anniversary year, there is good reason to be enthusiastic. Unlike 1990, today's technological innovations appear almost monthly, offering fresh ways to increase access and choice while reducing fear and complexity for new riders.

Still, an industry is made great not just by its newest machines, but by how it lives its values and meets its customers' greatest needs. Our work is about more than getting people to and from a workplace or doctor's office; it's about giving everyone the freedom, independence, and access to achieve their greatest potential.

ADA has taught our industry that progress is impossible without change. Our commitment to fulfilling the law's spirit has become a core tenet of who we are and what we do. Like so many of the people whose stories are told—and who are pictured—in this special publication, I am proud to have played a role in ADA's foundational years.

Thanks to ADA and the efforts of public transportation leaders, we move closer every day to a world with equal access for everyone, everywhere and at all times. It's a legacy that deserves to be celebrated.

#### HONORING THE SERVICE OF DR. GAYLE ALEXANDER

#### HON. ANDY BARR

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 28, 2015*

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an outstanding individual, Dr. Gayle Alexander, of Lexington, Kentucky. Dr. Alexander, a part of the greatest generation, served our nation in the United States Army.

Alexander grew up with a love for airplanes. He got his pilot's license at the age of fifteen, after just a few lessons. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, Alexander volunteered and was accepted immediately into the Army Air Corps as a pilot. He was assigned to be a flight instructor, training other pilots for combat flying.

After two years, Dr. Alexander finally got his wish to be a part of combat and was sent to England to fly B-24 and B-17 bombers that hit targets in Nazi-held Europe on a daily basis. He named his plane the "Kentucky Kloudhopper". Alexander spent much of the time flying a "Mickey ship" equipped with special radar and led other bombers to their targets. On one mission, he and his crew barely made it back to England with 308 holes in their plane, two engines out, and part of the tail missing.

On his nineteenth mission, Dr. Alexander led one of the biggest raids of the war, with 1,200 bombers attacking a German oil plant. His plane was blown to bits just moments after dropping its bombs. Alexander struggled to deploy his parachute, reached the ground, and was immediately captured. He spent seven long months in German POW camps, where he received virtually no medical care and endured bedbugs, starvation, bitter cold, and long distance marches. He and his fellow POWs were finally liberated on April 29, 1945 by General George Patton and his troops. Dr.

Alexander returned home on a hospital ship, weighing barely 113 pounds.

Dr. Alexander eventually recovered. He became a veterinarian and had a long and successful career in Lexington, Kentucky. Dr. Alexander has shared a video of his war memories, his uniform, and other memorabilia with the American Air Museum in Duxford, England.

The bravery of Dr. Alexander and his fellow men and women of the United States Army is heroic. Because of his courage and the courage of individuals from all across Kentucky and our great nation, our freedoms have been preserved for our generation and for future generations. He is truly an outstanding American, a patriot, and a hero to us all.

#### TRIBUTE TO BOB BREWSAUGH

#### HON. LUKE MESSER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 28, 2015*

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember the life of one of the best men I've ever known, Bob Brewsaugh who passed away over the weekend at the age of 76.

The good book says in 2 Corinthians 9:6, "He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."

Bob Brewsaugh lived this scripture.

Bob was a lifelong farmer, and a loving father and grandfather.

But, most importantly, Bob Brewsaugh was a man of God.

He worked hard. He treated everyone with kindness and respect.

Whether as a Sunday school teacher at Sandusky United Methodist Church or as a County Councilman or in his daily work on the farm . . . Bob tilled the land.

He sowed bountifully. And as a consequence, he reaped a blessed and bountiful life.

My thoughts and prayers are with Bob's wife Carolyn, his two kids Scott and Mandy, my brother Richie who is Bob's son-in-law, and Scott's wife Sarah.

I also pray for Bob's grandchildren, including my nephews Connor, Trey and Reid, and the entire extended Brewsaugh family.

#### RECOGNIZING MR. DUNCAN SHAW, CHAIRMAN EMERITUS, DEVIL PUPS

#### HON. JOSEPH J. HECK

OF NEVADA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, July 28, 2015*

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor today to honor the life of Mr. Duncan E. Shaw, a Korean War veteran and Chairman Emeritus of Devil Pups.

For more than 60 years, Duncan Shaw dedicated his time and talents to Devil Pups, a program started by his father in 1953 to provide teenagers with a life-changing opportunity to become better citizens and develop mentally, as well as physically, through Marine-inspired training.

Like his father, Duncan Shaw enlisted in the Marine Corps where he was assigned to Aviation and achieved the rank of Captain. He deployed to the combat zone during the Korean